

REMARKS

In the March 31, 2005 Office Action, claims 1, 10-12 and 17 stand rejected in view of prior art, while claims 2-9, 13-16 and 18-20 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Claim 17 was also objected to for a minor informality. No other objections or rejections were made in the Office Action. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter and the thorough examination of this application.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the March 31, 2005 Office Action, Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 15, 17 and 18 as indicated above. Thus, claims 1-20 are pending, with claims 1, 2, 15 and 18 being the only independent claims. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of above amendments and the following comments.

Drawings

In paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the Office Action indicates that the drawings filed on July 14, 2004 are acceptable. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for approval of the drawings filed on July 14, 2004.

Information Disclosure Statement

In paragraph 2 of the Office Action, the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 26, 2004 is acknowledged. The Office Action further indicates that the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 26, 2004 has been considered.

Claim Objections

In paragraph 3 of the Office Action, claim 17 is objected to for an informality in line 4, and appropriate correction is required. In response, Applicants have corrected claim 17 by the current amendment. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

In paragraphs 4-6 of the Office Action, claims 1, 10-12 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,577,969 to Watarai (hereinafter "the Watarai patent") and/or U.S. Patent No. 6,767,308 to Kitamura (hereinafter "the Kitamura patent"). In response, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to more clearly define the present invention over the prior art of record.

In particular, independent claim 1 has been amended to require a cable-free motor linkage operatively coupled to the output shaft of the motor unit and the front derailleur linkage to move the chain guide from the first shift position to the second shift position upon rotation of the output shaft in the first rotational direction and to move the chain guide from the second shift position to the first shift position upon rotation of the output shaft in the second rotational direction without the use of a mechanical cable operatively disposed between the motor unit and the front derailleur. Clearly, this structure is *not* disclosed or suggested by the Watarai patent or the Kitamura patent or any other prior art of record.

Specifically, the both the Watarai patent and the Kitamura patent utilize a conventional mechanical Bowden cable (with an outer sheath and an inner wire) operatively coupled between the so-called motor linkage and front derailleur. In other words, both the Watarai patent and the Kitamura patent utilize a motor to pull and release a conventional mechanical Bowden cable in order to actuate a cable operated front derailleur. Accordingly, neither the Watarai patent nor the Kitamura patent disclose the cable-free motor linkage, as currently required by independent claim 1. It is well settled under U.S. patent law that for a reference to anticipate a claim, the reference must disclose each and every element of the claim within the reference. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, as now amended, is not anticipated by the prior art of record. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Moreover, Applicants believe that dependent claims 10-12 and 17 are also allowable over the prior art of record in that they depend from independent claim 1, and therefore are allowable for the reasons stated above. Also, dependent claims 10-12 and 17 are further allowable because they include additional limitations. Thus, Applicants believe that since the prior art of record does not anticipate independent claim 1, neither does the prior art anticipate these dependent claims.

Allowable Subject Matter

In paragraph 7 of the Office Action, claims 2-10, 13-16 and 18-20 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter and the thorough examination of this application. In response, Applicants have amended claims 2, 15 and 18 to place them in independent form to accept allowable subject matter. Claims 3-9 depend from claim 1, claim 16 depends from claim 15, and claims 19 and 20 depends from claim 18. Thus, claims 2-10, 15, 16 and 18-20 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 13 and 14 have not been amended. Thus, claims 13 and 14 still depend from independent claim 1, which we now believe to be allowable.

Conclusion - Prior Art Citation

In paragraph 8 of the Office Action, additional prior art references were made of record and indicated as being pertinent to Applicants' disclosure. Applicants believe that these references do not render the claimed invention obvious.

* * *

In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicants respectfully assert that claims 1-20 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested. If there are any questions regarding this Amendment, please feel free to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



Patrick A. Hilsmier
Reg. No. 46,034

SHINJYU GLOBAL IP COUNSELORS, LLP
1233 Twentieth Street, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036
(202)-293-0444
Dated: May 27, 2005
G:\05-MAY05-MS\SN-US045009 Amendment.doc